



Mai·Wel



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

REFLECT

**Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan for
the years**

October 2020 – October 2021

Hands of Moments

Alison Buchanan – Junuy Maruwan

Gumbaynggirr Aboriginal Artist

Acknowledgement of Country

The Mai-Wel Group acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and learn. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future, and recognise their continuing connection and contribution to the land.

Our Business

The Mai-Wel Group delivers vibrant, innovative services and successful businesses which provide opportunity and choice for people with a disability and young jobseekers to achieve their dreams and live the life they choose.

Mai-Wel provides supports across three core services areas; Working Life; Lifestyle & Leisure and Living Options.

Working Life

- Australian Disability Enterprises – provides Supported Employment opportunities to people with a disability.
- Step Up/Get Started – School transition opportunities, building employability skills and independence.
- Transition to Work – employment skills building program for young people 15 – 21 who have some barrier to employment.
- Mai-Wel LabourForce Solutions – specialist employment service that assist people with a disability to find and keep a job.

Lifestyle and Leisure

- The Hub - provides social and recreational support to assist young people with a disability to increase independence, living and social skills while meeting new people and getting out in the community.
- The Hill – provides social and recreational support to people who have complex support needs, including behaviour support and high intensity personal care.
- Leisure Links – day trips, short stays and extended supported holiday options for people with a disability.
- Creative Arts – provides a variety of opportunities for artists with a disability to explore and develop their creative skills, supported by highly skilled Creative Arts Mentors.

Living Options

- Community Living - provides support to people with a disability who are living in their own home and require assistance to enhance their independence, or people living in their family home with the goal to move out and live independently or with friends. The services offered are flexible and responsive, based on the needs of the individual, their family and carers.
- Supported Living - A range of flexible accommodation options for adults with a disability, from residential homes, accommodation and tenancy support, to assistance in community-based living. Each supported accommodation option promotes and encourages a supportive and independent home environment with numerous models of staff support available, depending on individual goals, needs and abilities.

Mai-Wel's services are based in the Hunter Region, and operate across seven Local Government Areas with offices located in Maitland, Cessnock and Dungog and outreach teams covering Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie and the Lower Hunter (Singleton).

Our vision for excellence, equality and inclusion extends to all cohorts within our community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Workforce

The Mai-Wel Group is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse workforce which reflects the communities in which we operate and promotes an environment that highly values respect, dignity and growth.

As at 30 June 2019, we had 480 employees with 5, or 1% of our workforce, identifying as Aboriginal people.

Our Participants

In addition to our commitment to a diverse workforce, Mai-Wel is committed to improving accessibility and providing culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities with a disability in the Hunter.

As at 30th June 2019, we provide services to 1,329 participants, residents and job seekers with 212, or 16% of our service users, identifying as Aboriginal people.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Mai-Wel acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rich contribution and connection to the Land, histories, heritage and cultures of all regions across Australia.

Nationally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent a disproportionately high number of Australians with a disability. Today Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women experience disability at approximately twice the rate of other Australians, while Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are also twice as likely as other Australian children to have a disability. ABS data (2016) indicates that 5.3% of Maitland's population and 6.7% of Cessnock's population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ABS report, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with a Disability, 2012' (published Dec 2014) reports that 'the unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability was nearly three times as high as the comparable rate for non-Indigenous people with disability (25.3% compared with 9.0%).'

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will be a solid foundation for our ongoing commitment to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, programs, events and the adoption of respectful protocols.

In our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan we will begin to explore how we can strengthen internal processes and build the cultural competency of our staff. Mai-Wel will review this process in one year and advance to an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. Mai-Wel will use the following 12 months to adequately assess the internal needs of the organisation and to progress our journey.

Mai-Wel's RAP will be championed by General Manager Participant Services, who will actively monitor the RAP development, implement and track actions and report on progress. To ensure shared ownership of the RAP across all levels of the organisation, the Aboriginal Employees Network and Leadership Team will work together and be responsible for the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.

Our Reconciliation Vision

Mai-Wel is committed to advancing reconciliation by fostering meaningful partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders that are focused on embracing diversity, enhancing respect and providing equitable opportunities for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We understand that to restore and heal broken relationships we need to create a workplace and workforce that affirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, addresses inequalities and eliminates discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Our vision is to create a best practice, person-centred organisation that provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with culturally responsive and equitable access to both services and employment opportunities.

Our Current Partnerships & Activities

The Mai-Wel Group is in the early stages of our reconciliation journey. Some business units within the organisation have good working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and organisations, specifically Mai-Wel LabourForce Solutions, however other business units have limited partnerships and interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and services.

For the last two years, Mai-Wel have been involved with the Mindaribba Land Council's Family Fun Day and NAIDOC Week celebrations. Furthermore, for some years we have internally celebrated occasions such as NAIDOC Week. Mai-Wel is involved in Aboriginal networks such as the Newcastle Aboriginal Employment Interagency.

The Mai-Wel Aboriginal Employment Strategy was developed a number of years ago, however this document is somewhat outdated and needs review and appropriate implementation. This is acknowledged in the RAP and will be a significant project undertaken in 2020-2021.

Across Mai-Wel sites, there is limited visual evidence of providing culturally welcoming workplaces and reception areas. Some business units display the Aboriginal and Australian flags in the reception areas. We have engaged with a local Aboriginal artist to develop some artworks to be displayed in Mai-Wel premises.

As part of the RAP development, the Acknowledgement of Country was revised and a usage protocol developed and delivered to the Leadership Team. Our Acknowledgement of Country is now read at all staff meetings and internal and external events.

A RAP Working Group was established in August 2018 and they have met on five occasions to inform the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan and establish communication and implementation strategies across the organisation.

RAP Working Group Members

- Senior Leader – Chairperson
- Human Resource Officer/Quality Assurance Officer
- Service Consultant, Intake and Referral Team
- Employment Consultant
- Procurement Officer
- Service Lead Working Life
- Manager Employment Services
- Service Lead, Participant Services

Our Action Plan

 Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group. 	February 2021	General Management Participant Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group 	February 2021	Chairperson RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet at least three times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. 	March, June, September 2021	Chairperson RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop a guiding principles for future engagement. 	May 2021	Chairperson RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an engagement strategy to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisation. 	May 2021	CEO
Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategic alliances and operational partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within Mai-Wel's geographic footprint. 	April 2021	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we 	May 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead

	<p>could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. 	May 2021	<p>and Procurement Officer</p> <p>Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead</p>
Raise internal awareness of our RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments. • Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP. • Promote awareness of Mai-Wel's RAP through local media, maiwel.com.au, brochures, newsletter and social media. 	March 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead
		March 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead
		March 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead
Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. • Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27th May – 3rd June 2021.	<p>Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead and</p> <p>Human Resource Officer</p>
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs 	April 2021	Quality Assurance Officer
		June 2021	<p>Training Coordinator</p> <p>Human Resource Manager</p>

 Respect			
Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and create a calendar for dates of significance Promote dates of significance to staff through Outlook calendars, newsletter and social media. Encourage staff to attend events commemorating significant dates. 	February 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead and Training Coordinator
Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. Nominate staff and allocate resources to ensure that Mai-Wel is represented at NAIDOC Week events. 	6th July to 10th July 2021	Quality Assurance Officer and Training Coordinator
		June 2021	Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead
		6th July to 10th July 2021	Chairperson RAP Working Group
		June 2021	Managers
Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training plan and allocate 	May 2021	Human Resource Manager

<p>Islander cultural learning and development</p>	<p>resources to ensure staff have an opportunity to increase their awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and encourage staff to use Reconciliation Australia’s Share Our Pride online tool. • Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within the organisation • Capture data and measure our staff’s current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. 	<p>June 2021</p> <p>April 2021</p> <p>April 2021</p>	<p>Training Coordinator</p> <p>Quality Assurance Manager</p> <p>Training Coordinator</p> <p>Human Resource Manager and Training Coordinator</p>
<p>Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an online resource, through collaboration with the Traditional Owners of the land within Mai-Wel’s geographical footprint that facilitates storytelling and shares important cultural protocols. • Explore who the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters in our local area. 	<p>August 2021</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>Training Coordinator</p> <p>Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence. • Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols). 	<p>February 2021</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>Procurement Officer</p> <p>Quality Assurance Officer</p> <p>Communication and Corporate Identity Service Lead</p>
 <p>Opportunities</p>			
<p>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention strategy that is culturally sensitive and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join Mai-Wel as employees, participants, job seekers and volunteers. • Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships). • Promote professional and personal development opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff that provide future career opportunities and succession planning. 	<p>August 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>August 2021</p>	<p>Human Resource Manager</p> <p>Human Resource Manager</p> <p>Training Coordinator</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network. 	March 2021	Human Resource Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities. 	March 2021	Human Resource Manager
Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	May 2021	Procurement Officer and Business Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to establish partnerships with local businesses which provide reciprocal business opportunities for procurement and supply of goods and services. 	April 2021	Procurement Officer and Business Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	May 2021	Procurement Officer
 Tracking and Progress			
Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation. 	February 2021	General Manager Participant Services and RAP Working Party
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. 	March 2021	Quality Assurance Officer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 	20 September annually	General Manager Employment Services
Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a RAP Review based on learnings, challenges and achievements. • Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review • Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement. 	October 2021 December 2021 January 2021	Chairperson RAP Working Group General Manager Participant Services
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